

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1 1. A method for providing a visualization of an underlying architecture of a
2 software system, said method comprising:
3 accessing a datafile descriptive of the underlying architecture;
4 transforming the datafile to determine architectural components used to
5 form the underlying architecture; and
6 rendering a plurality of graphical elements representative of the
7 architectural components on a graphical display, the graphical elements forming a
8 graphical representation of the underlying architecture.

1 2. The method according to claim 1, further comprising:
2 generating a plurality of subsections of the graphical image; and
3 locating the graphical elements in the subsections as described by the
4 datafile.

1 3. The method according to claim 1, wherein the subsections are displayed
2 as tiers.

1 4. The method according to claim 1, further comprising providing access to
2 the visualization on a network.

1 5. The method according to claim 4, wherein the network is the Internet.

1 6. The method according to claim 1, further comprising communicating the
2 rendered graphical representation across a network.

1 7. The method according to claim 1, further comprising receiving data for
2 said rendering from a network connection.

1 8. The method according to claim 7, further comprising:
2 storing the data.

1 9. The method according to claim 1, further comprising:
2 providing at least one control on the graphical display;
3 receiving a selection of the at least one control; and
4 performing a graphical operation on the graphical display indicative of
5 dynamic functional operations of the underlying architecture.

1 10. The method according to claim 1, wherein the graphical display is a web
2 page.

1 11. The method according to claim 1, wherein the datafile includes
2 extensible markup language (XML).

1 12. The method according to claim 1, further comprising executing
2 interactive operations to provide a graphical representation of collaborative interaction
3 between the graphical elements.

1 13. The method according to claim 1, further comprising altering the
2 graphical elements based on a selected configuration of the software system.

1 14. The method according to claim 1, further comprising:
2 receiving an event initiated by an operation performed in a second
3 graphical display operating in isolation of actual components of the underlying
4 architecture; and
5 performing an operation on the graphical display based on the event.

1 15. The method according to claim 1, further comprising:
2 receiving an event initiated by an operation performed in a second
3 graphical display operating in conjunction with actual components of the underlying
4 architecture; and
5 performing an operation on the graphical display based on the event.

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1 16. A system for providing a visualization of an underlying architecture of a
2 software system, said system comprising:

3 a communication port for receiving information from a network;

4 a display unit for displaying the visualization of the underlying
5 architecture of the software system; and

6 a processing unit coupled to said communication port and said display
7 unit, said processing unit operable to:

8 receive the information indicative of the underlying architecture
9 from the network;

10 process the information indicative of the underlying architecture
11 of the software system; and

12 render the processed information on said display to display a
13 graphical representation of the underlying architecture.

1 17. The system according to claim 16, wherein said processing unit further:

2 generates a plurality of subsections on the graphical image; and

3 applies a plurality of graphical elements in the subsections as described
4 by the processed information.

1 18. The system according to claim 16, wherein the network is the Internet.

1 19. The system according to claim 16, wherein said communication port is
2 coupled to a network to provide access to a datafile located on a host server on the
3 network.

1 20. The system according to claim 19, wherein the information is derived
2 from the datafile by the host server.

1 21. The system according to claim 16, wherein the visualization is displayed
2 in a graphical user interface having at least one control for altering the visualization.

1 22. The system according to claim 21, wherein the at least one control
2 initiates a simulated event.

1 23. The system according to claim 16, wherein the visualization is displayed
2 on a web page.

1 24. The system according to claim 16, wherein the information includes
2 extensible markup language (XML) code.

1 25. The system according to claim 16, wherein said processing unit further:
2 receives an event initiated by an operation performed in a graphical user
3 interface operating in isolation of actual components of the underlying architecture; and
4 performs an operation on the graphical user interface based on the event.

1 26. The system according to claim 16, wherein said processing unit further:
2 receives an event initiated by an operation performed in a graphical user
3 interface operating in conjunction with actual components of the underlying
4 architecture; and
5 performs an operation on the graphical display based on the event.

1 27. A system for providing a visualization of an underlying architecture of a
2 software system, said system comprising:

3 a servlet engine operable to manage the visualization;

4 a stylesheet database including at least one style format to display the
5 visualization; and

6 an interface component coupled to said servlet engine, said interface
7 component operable to receive events from the software system.

1 28. The system according to claim 27, wherein the software system is a
2 website.

1 29. The system according to claim 27, further comprising a storage device
2 having at least one datafile describing the visualization stored thereon.

1 30. The system according to claim 27, wherein the system is a server
2 coupled to a network.

1 31. The system according to claim 30, wherein the network is the Internet.

1 32. A computer-readable medium having stored thereon sequences of
2 instructions, the sequences of instructions including instructions, when executed by a
3 processor, causes the processor to:

4 access a datafile descriptive of the underlying architecture;

5 transform the datafile to determine architectural components used to
6 form the underlying architecture; and

7 render a plurality of graphical elements representative of the
8 architectural components on a graphical display, the graphical elements forming a
9 graphical representation of the underlying architecture.

1 33. The computer-readable medium according to claim 32, wherein the
2 instructions further cause the processor to communicate the graphical representation of
3 the underlying architecture across a network.

1 34. The computer-readable medium according to claim 33, wherein the
2 network is the Internet.

1 35. A system for providing a visualization of an underlying architecture of a
2 software system, said system comprising:
3 receiving a request for the visualization;
4 transforming the data to form information indicative of a visualization of
5 the underlying architecture; and
6 communicating the information across a network.

1 36. The method according to claim 35, wherein the data is HTML.

1 37. The method according to claim 35, wherein said transforming includes
2 applying a stylesheet to the data.

1 38. The method according to claim 35, further comprising rendering the
2 information to display a graphical representation of the underlying architecture.

1 39. The method according to claim 35, wherein the software system is a
2 website.

1 40. The method according to claim 35, wherein the network is the Internet.